

Chapter 6 ISSUES

Key issues in the City of Long Beach to be addressed within the context of the General Plan Land Use and Mobility Elements update include, but are not limited to, the following:

6.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC

- The population in the City of Long Beach increased from 429,433 to 461,522, or by 7.5 percent from 1990 to 2000. However, the number of households only increased by 2.6 percent. This indicates that overcrowding is increasing in the City.
- The construction of housing units in the City of Long Beach has not kept pace with the growing population from 1990 to 2000. The number of housing units has increased by only 0.7 percent during this time period, another indicator that overcrowding is on the rise.
- SCAG projects that population in the City of Long Beach will grow slowly over the next twenty years, increasing from about 477,738 in 2005 to 534,128 in 2025, or about 0.6 percent annually. Employment is projected to grow about the same as population, and households are projected to grow only slightly more than population and employment.
- The average annual household income in City of Long Beach was estimated at about \$54,735 annually in 2000, less than the County's average annual household income of \$63,010.
- About 22.4 percent of the population in the City was determined to have poverty status in 2000, compared to the County at 17.5 percent.
- As a percent of total units, overcrowded units (defined as greater than 1.0 occupant per room), comprised 22.5 percent of the total units in the City of Long Beach during 2000. In the County, overcrowded units comprised 13.6 percent of the total units. Overcrowded units are a reflection of the increasing population growth without a relative increase in the number of housing units to meet this need. Additionally, overcrowding indicates there may be a lack of housing that is suitable or affordable.
- In 2000, about 27.3 percent of the population in the City of Long Beach age 25 years and older had not achieved a high school diploma, compared to 30.1 percent in the County. This indicates that a sizable proportion of the labor force may require job skill training in order to compete in the labor market for higher wages.

- Land costs throughout the under-utilized commercial corridors of Long Beach have increased significantly beyond comparable increases in commercial and residential rents, based on analysis of City documents.
- Except for the established commercial centers and the business district in Belmont Shore, the local serving retail establishments tend to be independently owned and do not generate strong taxable sales.
- Mixed-Use projects in older areas generally require public subsidies in order to develop within under-utilized commercial corridors regardless of the location within or outside an adopted redevelopment area.
- Public infrastructure improvements require greater funding than identified, resulting in potential infrastructure gaps and the inability of the City to offer sufficient financial incentives.
- In particular, the Port of Long Beach is dependent on heavy truck traffic that creates impacts on the City's streets, increasing the City's level of services and operations and maintenance costs. The Port indicated an annual 4.53 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units) in 2002 for the Port of Long Beach, which will only reinforce the need for rail and truck related infrastructure.
- The City inventoried 1,000 acres of vacant land that it will market to the development community. With the exception of the Boeing site, these vacant parcels are scattered throughout the City and require land assemblage to create developable sites.
- In the Eastside Cluster, the reuse of the Boeing site as a mixed-use campus with retail, business park, industrial and residential land uses has the most market potential.
- There are opportunities for mixed-use development (commercial/ residential) in existing older and under utilized commercial corridors.
- Competition is keen in attracting higher paying jobs, especially in the high-tech industry. The City of Long Beach will have to undertake an aggressive marketing campaign to lure these types of end users.
- The Port of Long Beach and the Port-related activities are major employers in the City. Port-related activities support jobs in the transportation industry, importing and exporting, manufacturing, distribution and sales, in addition to the construction of Port improvements. According to the Port of Long Beach, an estimated 30,000 jobs in the City are supported by Port activity.
- Opportunities for revitalization and intensification of the commercial corridors in the City will be enhanced through the promotion of pedestrian and transit-oriented design principles, including: mixing residential and/or office above street level retail/commercial uses, designing around transit nodes where access is provided though some form of public transit, and designing pedestrian-oriented development.

- The City will also achieve its goal of increasing its residential base through these revitalization opportunities. Zoning ordinances should promote mixed-use development and address financial requirements and government incentives. Promoting pedestrian and transit-oriented development can create projects that are economically viable.
- Due to the lack of larger vacant properties and the built out nature of the City's commercial corridors, opportunities will be limited primarily to redevelopment and recycling of existing, under-utilized properties.

6.2 LAND USE

- There is not sufficient land for industrial and/or distribution/warehousing land use.
- There is no short term demand for new office development outside of the downtown and Long Beach Airport areas.
- There is a need to increase owner occupied housing.
- Negative community reaction toward increased housing density.
- Revitalize and better utilize commercial corridors as pedestrian-oriented; reduce the number of liquor stores, motels, and auto repair shops.
- Need to upgrade street beautification and maintenance.
- The City of Long Beach corporate limits are approaching buildout of available land use. Opportunities for new development within the City are constrained by limited land availability and physical features. These factors present an increased opportunity to explore reuse and intensification of existing areas and uses within the City.
- Quality retail and restaurants are lacking in many parts of Long Beach, and are strongly desired by residents and employees. The City has been making on-going efforts to enhance retail sales revenue.
- There are opportunities to create more community-oriented pedestrian-friendly neighborhood retail centers in Long Beach that will provide goods and services desired by Long Beach residents.
- Long Beach is built at a relatively low density/intensity; there are few buildings more than three stories high in the City, with the exception of downtown. While this is typical of suburban development, the opportunity exists to cluster some uses, such as mid-rise Class A office development, to create viable business centers and reduce infrastructure costs.
- Traffic congestion is a major concern in Long Beach, and could be seen as a disincentive for future development. The opportunity exists to create more high

quality jobs in the City, reducing the need for some commuters to leave Long Beach for work each day.

- There are insufficient parks and open space areas in Community Clusters 1, 2, and 3.
- Some neighborhoods can benefit by having more community focal points in the form of community buildings in parks, restaurants, and other public gathering places. The opportunity exists to make shopping centers more pedestrian-oriented with additional community and recreational amenities that could serve as gathering places, such as skating rinks, bowling alleys, or other indoor sports facilities.

6.3 MOBILITY

- Traffic that uses City local streets to avoid congestion on the freeway or arterial system that passes through City of Long Beach may be the largest impact and most significant transportation issue facing the City.
- The opportunity exists for the City of Long Beach to coordinate with neighboring cities and Los Angeles County to address impacts of new roadway improvements, as well as to ensure consistency across jurisdictional boundaries.
- There is an opportunity for the City of Long Beach to revise its street standards, which have not been revised since 1988, as future population growth and development occurs.
- The City of Long Beach needs to address potential future traffic impacts associated with increased freight rail activity and truck movement in and through the City from population growth and development, especially the Port of Long Beach.
- Need to develop a coordinated system for current local, regional, and interregional transit operations to ease commuting.
- Need to improve congestion and parking on the local street system, particularly around schools.
- Potential increased traffic impacts to the roadway system currently vacant parcels and underutilized are developed.

6.4 INFRASTRUCTURE

6.4.1 Water

- Best Management Practices with respect to water conservation and water use efficiency on new development within the City and SOI is being implemented. City should continue this practice.

- City's recycled water supply system to offset the use of potable water for irrigation is being implemented. City should continue this practice.
- City's use of its existing groundwater resources through blending and desalination; and to develop a hydraulic pipe network that can transport water across the City from service zone to service zone increasing system reliability is being implemented. City should continue this practice.
- As population within the City increases up to 2020, city buildout demands on the City's water supply will continue to rise. Annexation of the SOI areas will likely lead to further development and increased water demand.
- Future US EPA and State of California Department of Health Services water quality regulations may affect the City's water quality, supply, and treatment standards.
- City is currently revising its water and sewer master plan documents to reflect updates and incorporate current and future needs.

6.4.2 Sewer/Waste Water

- Opportunities exist to develop a sewer collection system to serve the unincorporated SOI areas that are presently unsewered.
- Proposed US EPA's CMOM Regulations are proposed to be adopted by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), affecting the City's capacity, management, operation, and maintenance of wastewater facilities. The city has been proactive in these efforts.
- Future Waste Discharge Requirements (WRD) will have greater emphasis on the control of fats, oils, and grease (FOG) in the City's waste discharge. The Los Angeles Region RWQCB may require the City to complete a sewer system management plan (SSMP) which will address emergency spill response, preventative maintenance program, establish legal authority, and FOG mitigation measures. City has been proactive in these efforts to meet future requirements.

6.4.3 Stormwater Drainage

- As federal and State stormwater requirements become increasingly strict, it will be more difficult for the City to be in compliance.
- New development provides opportunities to generate revenue for the enhancement of existing stormwater facilities to stay in compliance with upcoming stormwater regulations.
- It will be more difficult for the City to comply with the numerical standards in the form of "Total Maximum Daily Loads" (TMDL) for trash, nutrients, pathogens, and other pollutants.

- There is an opportunity to increase maintenance of the stormwater facilities to limit periodic street flooding and sewer flow spikes.

6.4.4 Telecommunications

- Opportunities exist for the expansion of broadband technologies, wireless networks, and other infrastructure improvements to provide high-quality telecommunication services for the City of Long Beach.
- There are opportunities to create economic development incentives to retain and attract new businesses to the City through the maintenance of a robust telecommunications system.
- There are opportunities to maintain and update City infrastructure at a rate that supports implementation of increased technology, given the fast pace of evolving technology.

6.4.5 Solid Waste

- Maintaining compliance with State mandates
- New mandates/landfill bans
- Increased source reduction and recycling incentives (more stringent PAYT)
- Composting facilities
- Electronics waste
- Construction and demolition debris